

Message Text

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44

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-09 IO-10 ISO-00 SAM-01 CIAE-00

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PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 EB-07 COME-00 INT-05 OMB-01

TRSE-00 /095 W

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R 121000Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3373

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY RABAT

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFORPVR MO

SUBJECT: SPANISH SAHARA: MOROCCAN-MAURITANIAN RELATIONS

REF: B. NOUAKCHOTT 0080 B. NOUAKCHOTT 0269

SUMMARY: GIRM REFUSED FIFTY MILLION DOLLAR OFFER TO BAIL-OUT FOUNDERING MAURITANIAN COPPER MINE IN RETURN FOR GIRM SUPPORT FOR MOROCCO'S CLAIM TO SPANISH SAHARA. REFUSAL HIGHLIGHTS CONTINUED MAURITANIAN RELUCTANCE TO RELINQUISH ITS OWN CLAIM TO SPANISH SAHARA, FRAGILITY OF MAURITANIAN-MOROCCAN COOPERATIVE POLICY ON THIS DISPUTED TERRITORY AND GIRM'S DISTRUST OF MOROCCAN MOTIVES TOWARD MAURITANIA ITSELF. END SUMMARY.

1. 17-MAN MOROCCAN DELEGATION HEADED BY DIRECTOR GENERAL OF OFFICE OF PHOSPHATES, MOHAMED KARIM EL AMRANI, ARRIVED NOUAKCHOTT JANUARY 22 FOR EXPECTED
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5-DAY STAY. DELEGATION MET BRIEFLY WITH WORKING LEVEL

PERSONNEL IN MINISTRIES OF FISHERIES, PLAN, MINES, TRANSPORT AND INDUSTRY. PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH EXPRESSED IMPORTANCE HE ATTACHED TO MOROCCAN VISITORS BY MEETING WITH ENTIRE DELEGATION AND HOSTING DINNER. THERE WAS NO COMMUNIQUE FOLLOWING THIS TWO-DAY VISIT.

2. SEVERAL SOURCES CLOSE TO NEGOTIATIONS, HOWEVER, SAY MOROCCANS FAILED IN THEIR MISSION TO CEMENT MOROCCAN-MAURITANIAN TIES IN WAKE OF GIRM SUPPORT FOR MOROCCO'S RESOLUTION TO SUBMIT SPANISH SAHARA ISSUE TO ICJ AND OULD DADDAH'S DECEMBER 9 MEETING WITH KING HASSAN. AS EVIDENCE OF THIS FAILURE, TRUNCATED TWO-DAY STAY BY MOROCCAN DELEGATION WAS HARDLY SUFFICIENT TO EXPLORE RANGE OF SUBJECTS SUGGESTED BY LARGE MOROCCAN DELEGATION.

3. MORE IMPORTANTLY, FINANCIAL DIRECTOR OF MAURITANIAN INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT COMPANY (SNIM) CONFIRMS THAT MOROCCANS TABLED FIFTY MILLION DOLLAR OFFER TO SAVE NEAR-BANKRUPT MAURITANIAN COPPER MINE. NEGOTIATIONS BROKE DOWN, HOWEVER, AND MOROCCANS CUT SHORT THEIR VISIT WHEN GIRM BALKED AT "POLITICAL STRINGS" ATTACHED. SNIM SOURCE SAYS MOROCCANS WANTED GIRM TO DROP ITS CLAIM TO SPANISH SAHARA AND SUPPORT GOM CLAIM. DESPITE SERIOUS FINANCIAL CONDITION OF MAURITANIA'S COPPER MINE (95 MILLION DOLLARS IN DEBT), GIRM REFUSED MOROCCAN OFFER, THUS TENDING TO CONFIRM PS RELUCTANCE TO GIVE UP CLAIM TO SAHARA.

4. FONMIN MOUAKNASS RECENTLY SAID (REF A) THERE ARE NO DIFFERENCES IN OBJECTIVES OF MAURITANIAN AND MOROCCAN POLICY TOWARD SPANISH SAHARA, E.E., SPANISH MUST END THEIR OCCUPATION OF THAT TERRITORY. GIRM HAS NOT, HOWEVER, INDICATED ANY CHANGE IN ITS POLICY WHICH VARIOUSLY CLAIMS SPANISH SAHARA AS MAURITANIAN AND SUPPORTS SELF-DETERMINATION OF TERRITORY THROUGH UN-SUPERVISED REFERENDUM.

5. RECENT MOROCCAN GOVERNMENT ADVERTISEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE MENTIONED MOROCCO'S CLAIM TO "ITS PROVINCES AT THE RIVER SENEGAL" (REF B). SUCH WORDING CAN ONLY REINFORCE GIRM'S DEEPLY HELD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SUSPICION THAT A MOROCCAN SAHARA MIGHT LEAD TO REAWAKENED DESIRE FOR MAURITANIAN TERRITORY.

6. DESPITE THESE CONCERNS AND MOROCCO'S CLUMSY ATTEMPT TO BUY THE MAURITANIANS, GIRM WILL PROBABLY CONTINUE ITS EFFORTS TO KEEP ALL OPTIONS OPEN BY CURRYING FAVOR IN RABAT AS WELL AS IN ALGIERS AND POSSIBLY EVEN MADRID. RDSPANISH CHARGE, FOR EXAMPLE, SAYS HE HAS BEEN ASSURED

GIRM WILL SAY NOTHING ABOUT MOROCCAN CLAIM TO CEUTA
AND MELILLA. MAURITANIA'S SELF-INTEREST MAY,
THEREFORE, LIMIT EXPANSION OF MOROCCAN-MAURITANIAN COOPERATION,
SUGGESTING TO MOROCCO INSUFFICIENT GOOD WILL ON PART OF GIRM.
THIS IN TURN, COULD LEAD TO REVIVAL OF LAST SUMMER'S ANTI-
MAURITANIAN PRESS CAMPAIGN BY GOM. END RESULT MAY BE BREAKDOWN
OF RECENT RAPPROACHMENT BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES. SHINN

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